

## THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL

### MINUTES

Of a virtual meeting of the Equalities Sub-Committee, held on Monday 9 September at 7.00pm until 7.51pm.

**Present:** Councillors:

Anne Winter (Chair)	Sarah Nelmes
Kevin Raeburn (Vice-Chair)	Reena Ranger
Louise Price	Abbas Merali
Raj Khiroya	Ciaran Reed
Khalid Hussain	Stephen Giles-Medhurst
Rue Grewal	

**Officers in Attendance:**

Emma Sheridan, Associate Director for Customer and Community  
Shivani Dave, Partnerships Manager  
Rebecca Young, Head of Strategy and Partnerships

**Also in Attendance:**

Anita Hibbs, Committee Manager

**External Attendance:**

Huwaydah Malik, Watford and Three Rivers Trust  
Margaret Gallagher, ASCEND

#### **ESC1 APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIR OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE**

Councillor Raj Khiroya moved, duly seconded, that Councillor Anne Winter be nominated as Chair of the Equalities Sub-Committee for the Local Government Year 2023/24.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Anne Winter be appointed to be Chair of the panel for the Local Government Year 2023/24.

#### **ESC2 APPOINTMENT OF THE VICE CHAIR OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE**

Councillor Anne Winter moved, duly seconded, that Councillor Kevin Raeburn be nominated as Vice-Chair of the Equalities Sub-Committee for the Local Government Year 2023/24.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Kevin Raeburn be appointed to be Vic-Chair of the Equalities Sub-Committee for the Local Government Year 2023/24.

#### **ESC3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None received.

## **ESC4 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Equalities Sub-Committee held on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2023 were agreed as an accurate account and would be signed by the Chair at the first opportunity.

## **ESC5 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **ESC6 NOTICE OF OTHER BUSINESS**

There were no items of other business.

## **ESC7 DIGITAL ISOLATION**

Huwaydah Malik (HM) from Watford and Three Rivers Trust (W3RT) presented the work that W3RT have been delivering to tackle the issue of Digital isolation in Watford and Three Rivers. Uptake was notably higher in Watford but work is underway to increase engagement in the district. Projects outlined included digital champions programme and a pilot project working with Mill End GPs to show patients how to use the NHS app and book appointments online.

A copy of the presentation is provided with the minutes.



Digital Inclusion  
09.10.23.pptx

A Member asked how people can access the support. HM described the referral process available and [provided the link](#)

The Head of Strategy and Partnership thanked HM for the presentation and described work that the council was embarking on with

HM identified that there was a low number of volunteers in Three Rivers and outlined plans to promote volunteer opportunities via the council communications platforms in order to increase the number.

The Partnership Manager offered the support of officers based in the GP surgery to signpost to the service if the pilot is extended.

The Chair asked what age range the service supported. HM advised that the service offered support for those aged 18 and above but majority of those supported at 55 plus. Some younger residents had been supported, mainly with access to devices for the purpose of applying for jobs

RESOLVED:

That the content of the presentation be noted.

## **ESC8 SOCIAL ISOLATION**

Margaret Gallagher (MG) presented the work that ASCEND deliver in South Oxhey in providing relief to those in need. The presentation focused on those who were experiencing loneliness and social isolation, the reasons for this and some of the work that was being done by ASCEND to address this in South Oxhey .

A copy of the presentation is provided with the minutes.



A Member described work that he was involved in through his church in supporting young people. He asked how much of a role the council should be leading on this and how much the council should be supporting other organisations to deliver this independently of the councils.

MG responded that what was needed was joined up working between the public and voluntary sector to fill the gaps that exist. Literacy issues were provided as a barrier to many and there was a lack of consistent funding to provide the necessary programmes.

RESOLVED:

That the content of the presentation be noted.

### **ESC9 EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY 2023**

The Partnerships Manager presented a post-consultation version of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy that would ensure the Council's ongoing compliance in its duties under the Equality Act (2010). The revised version includes the updated census data on the demographics of the district at Lower Super Output Area level.

A member asked how often we would be reviewing the policy. The Partnership Manager advised that the work to implement the strategy is reviewed on an annual basis and published through the annual Equalities Duty Information Report but the policy itself will be reviewed in 2025-26.

The Head of Strategy and Partnership explained that there was a statutory duty to review the objectives every four years and the period covered by this new policy would bring that in line with that.

A member commented that the low response to the consultation could be a result of the policy being politically neutral and that this was reflective of wide consensus of support for the policy.

RESOLVED:

That the report recommended to Policy and Resources Committee for approval ahead of presentation to Council for adoption.

### **ESC10 EQUALITIES SUB-COMMITTEE WORK PLAN**

The sub-committee received the work plan. The Head of Strategy and Partnerships said suggestions from Members regarding future items, or community groups that could be invited, would be welcome.

RESOLVED:

That the workplan be agreed.

### **ESC11 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

“Under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the

grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined under paragraph (X) of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act. It has been decided by the Council that in all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.”

**ESC12 OTHER BUSINESS - IF APPROVED UNDER ITEM 6 ABOVE**

None

**CHAIR**